

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 02869 101433Z

46

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4315

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USMTM DHAHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 2869

DOD FOR ISA AND CNO

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, SA

SUBJECT: SAG RQUEST TO SEND SAUDIS TO ANNAPOLIS

1. MINISTER OF DEFENSE PRINCE SULTAN, REFERENCING MOU ON SAUDI NAVAL EXPANSION PROGRAM, HAS REQUESTED IN A LETTER TO THE US SECRETARY OF DEFENSE THAT THE USG ACCEPT TEN SAUDIS ANNUALLY FOR TEN YEARS FOR ENTRY INTO US NAVAL ACADEMY.

2. AFTER CONSULTATION WITH USMT WE LEARN THAT SNEP PROJECT OFFICE IS ALREADY INVESTIGATING STATE MARITIME ACADEMIES, NROTC PROGRAMS, AND NACAL OCS AS POSSIBLE SOURCES OF TRAINING FOR SAUDI NAVAL OFFICERS, AND WE AGREE THAT THESE WILL HAVE TO BE PRIMARY SOURCES OF US TRAINING. WE RECOGNIZE, OF COURSE, THAT ONLY VERY LIMITED NUMBER OF FOREIGN STUDENTS ARE ADMITTED TO THE USNA AND THAT LEGISLATION WOULD BE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN ANY SLTOS FOR SAG, BUT UNDERSTAND THAT LEGISLATION NOW PENDING TO ADMIT TWO STUDENTS FROM IRAN IN 1974 AND 1975.

3. EMBASSY THINKS THAT ADMISSION OF TWO STUDENTS PER YEAR FROM SAUDI ARABIA WOULD BE REASONABLE RESPONSE TO PRINCE SULTAN'S REQUEST AND WOULD OFFER US EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY
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PAGE 02 JIDDA 02869 101433Z

TO INFLUENCE THE FORMATION OF WHAT WOULD BECOME, IN

FUTURE YEARS, THE MOST PROFESSIONAL ELEMENT OF THE SAG NAVY. NOT ONLY IS IT IMPORTANT TO US INTERESTS THAT NAVAL FORCES IN THIS AREA OF THE WORLD BE UNDER LEADERSHIP SYMPATHETIC TO U.S., BUT THE BUILDING OF A CONFIDENT, PROFESSIONAL SAG NAVAL FORCE COULD ALSO HELP FOSTER SAUDI-IRANIAN COOPERATION,-- SINCE SAUDI LACK OF CONFIDENCE AND RELUCTANCE TO EXPOSE THEIR DEFICIENCIES IS ONE OF THE GREATEST OBSTACLES TO THIS COOPERATION.

4. NO DOUBT, USNA CANDIDATES WOULD HAVE TO BE CHOSEN WITH CARE TO RAISE ODDS AGAINST BARELY MARGINAL PERFORMANCE. SOME PRIVATE PREP SCHOOL OR JUNIOR COLLEGE TIME IN U.S. FOR YEAR OR TWO PRIOR TO ENTRY, TO INSURE HIGH ELC GRADES AND PROVIDE SOLID MATH FOUNDATION, WOULD NOT BE UNREASONABLE REQUIREMENT.

5. ACTION REQUESTED. EMBASSY STRONGLY URGES THAT DEPARTMENT AND DOD REQUEST AUTHORIZATION ALLOW TWO SAUDIS PER YEAR (FOR AT LEAST A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD) TO ENTER U.S NAVAL ACADEMY, BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 1974. SULTAN'S LETTER TO SECDEF BEING POUCHED FOR REPLY.
THAKER

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